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# GARBAGE GAZETTE



## Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

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### President Clinton Signs Federal Battery Law

On May 13, 1996, President Clinton signed into law the "Mercury-Containing and Rechargeable Battery Management Act", which establishes the Universal Waste Rule as the national regulatory standard for the collection, storage, and transportation of nickel-cadmium and other hazardous waste batteries. The law also sets standards for mercury content in alkaline and zinc-carbon batteries, prohibits the sale of mercuric oxide button cell batteries, requires that nickel-cadmium batteries be labeled and all rechargeable batteries to be easily removable.

Connecticut was one of the first states to require nickel-cadmium batteries to be easily removable and labeled, and to set limits on the amount of mercury in alkaline and zinc carbon batteries, with legislation dating back to 1991. The federal law prohibits the sale of any alkaline or zinc-carbon battery with any intentionally introduced mercury. This supersedes the current Connecticut standard of .025% mercury by weight. The ban on the sale of mercuric oxide button cells supersedes the state law requiring retail outlets to accept them from consumers.

The "Universal Waste Rule" establishes a separate category of hazardous waste with less stringent requirements for collection, storage and transportation of "universal wastes." The federal list of universal wastes include certain agricultural pesticides, thermostats, and all hazardous waste batteries. Connecticut, which is going through the process of incorporating the Universal Waste Rule into the state hazardous waste regulations, intends to add mercury-containing lamps to the list of universal wastes.

This new federal legislation allows generators to manage their hazardous waste batteries as a universal waste prior to incorporation of the Universal Waste Rule at the state level. In addition, it sets the national management standard, even in states that do not incorporate the Universal Waste Rule.

Kim Kelley, President of the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC), lauded the Battery Management Act because it "greatly facilitates RBRC's efforts to implement its national program". The RBRC is a non-profit public service organization which has established a program to recover and recycle nickel-cadmium batteries. Connecticut has supported the RBRC program since June of 1995. The current legislation does not effect the retail facet of the program in which customers can recycle their nickel-cadmium batteries through retail outlets, but does allow businesses to participate in the program. For more information about the RBRC "Charge Up To Recycle" program, call 1-800-8BATTERY.

### Recycling Program Staff Member to Serve on National Advisory Board

Tom Metzner, an Environmental Analyst with CT DEP's Recycling Program, was invited to serve on the National Advisory Board of the RBRC's "Charge Up To Recycle!" program. The board will advise the RBRC on how to increase participation and suggest program improvements to the nickel-cadmium battery recycling program.



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## Montville's Innovative Reuse Program Benefits Non-profits and Reduces Disposal



The Town of Montville has designed a creative reuse program which reduces disposal and provides needed revenue for local non-profit groups. At the transfer station, the town has a covered dumpster in a designated area where residents can drop off useful household items. The items typically collected include books, toys, small T.V.s, small appliances, etc. Reusable large items such as furniture are set aside and given free to any Montville resident who wants them. Mattresses and box springs in good condition are given to Reliance House, which provides services to the homeless.

The small items are brought to an old school where a room has been set aside for a year-round tag sale. Volunteers for the Town of Montville bring the items over to the school and put them on the shelves for display. Local charities then make arrangements with the local recycling coordinator, Fannie Isidore, to reserve a weekend to hold a fundraising sale for their organization. All the tag sale items are already there and on display. All that the non-profit group needs to do is provide volunteers to run the sale. During one 3-month period, volunteer groups raised \$2,375.00 at these sales. According to Fannie, the sales are especially popular in the winter when the weather doesn't permit outdoor sales. Overflow items are given to Goodwill or similar agencies.

In addition to this ongoing program, the Montville High School Student Environmental Awareness League (SEAL's), in collaboration with Mr. George Dennison of Waterford, CT, collected, sorted and packed three hundred and twenty eight boxes (328) boxes, or approximately 7,000 books for shipment to a needy school district in the Appalachian Region. Two students traveled with Mr. Dennison to deliver these books, along with a thirteen station computer system, and other electronic equipment such as recorders, tape-players, etc. Congratulations to Montville on this creative program which reduces waste while providing assistance to those in need.

## Connecticut Recyclers Coalition Launches Fashion Show Loan Box Program

The Connecticut Recyclers Coalition (CRC) has designed a fashion show loan box targeted at middle and high school students. The loan boxes contain: a video of the CRC fashion show, "Recycling Hits the Runway" (held last fall), a script and program from the same show, a timetable/tip sheet, dozens of samples of clothing, office supplies, and accessories - all made from recycled materials. In addition, each loan kit contains a Resource Guide, which lists companies that produce recycled fashions and the Connecticut retail outlets where they can be purchased. In short, the kits supply any class or group borrowing the kit with everything that they need to put on their own recycled products fashion show. Even if you don't want to put on your own show, the kits can also be used by any teacher to enhance a lesson on recycling.

CRC has produced a total of eight kits, which will be distributed at different locations throughout the state. The kits will be available for 1 month loans starting October 1, 1996. This is a great project for an environmental club or civic group. To receive a brochure describing the program, or to find the CRC representative nearest you, contact Meg Enkler at (860) 424-3365.

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